

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 8027

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: POLITICAL CHANGE AS SEEN BY "CORTES" LEADER

SUMMARY: AN INFLUENTIAL MEMBER OF THE "CORTES", CLOSE TO RODRIGUEZ DE VALCARCEL, INDICATED THE PUSH IS ON IN THE CORTES TO TRY TO CONVINCE THE PRINCE TO RETAIN RODRIGUEZ DE VALCARCEL AS "CORTES" PRESIDENT. REFLECTING, WE ASSUME, THE VIEWS OF VALCARCEL AND THE EMBROYO "ANEPA" POLITICAL ASSOCIATION, OUR SOURCE POINTED TO THE "CORTES" AS THE WAY TO ACCOMPLISH EVOLUTION WITHIN THE SYSTEM THROUGH LEGISLATION RATHER THAN CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT. HE TOOK STRONG POSITION AGAINST ANY APERTURA THAT WOULD INCLUDE SOCIALIST PSOE AND OTHERS CALLING FOR "RUPTURE" WITH THE FRANCO PAST.
END SUMMARY

1. THE WELL-KNOWN "CORTES" DEPUTY SALVADOR SERRATS, CLOSE TO RODRIGUEZ DE VALCARCEL AND VICE PRESIDENT OF EMBROYO POLITICAL ASSOCIATION "ANEPA", EXPRESSED SOME FEARS TO EMBOFF NOV 13 ABOUT DANGERS OF PRESENT INTERREGNUM, ALTHOUGH HE BELIEVED THAT PRINCE'S INITIAL ACTIONS HAD GAINED HIM ENOUGH PRESTIGE TO INSURE THAT THE TRANSITION WOULD BE SMOOTH.

2. SERRATS BELIEVES THAT "CORTES" PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ DE VALCARCEL WOULD BE NAMED BY THE PRINCE FOR ANOTHER SIX-YEAR TERM. NO OTHER DEPUTY HAS VALCARCEL'S QUALIFI-
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CATIONS NOR HIS PROVEN MERIT IN UPGRADING "CORTES"

PARTICIPATION IN GOVT OVER THE PAST SIX YEARS, HE SAID, IN A CLAIM DIFFICULT TO EVALUATE, HE SAID 80 PERCENT OF ITS MEMBERS FAVOR VALCARCEL'S REDESIGNATION. THE COUNCIL OF THE REALM, WHICH WILL HAVE 10 DAYS BEGINNING NOV 26 TO SUBMIT THREE NAMES TO THE PRINCE, WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO INCLUDE VALCARCEL'S NAME. FRANCO STYLE POLITICS ARE OVER. BOTH THE COUNCIL AND THE PRINCE WILL HAVE TO GIVE WEIGHT TO THE VIEWS OF THE MAJORITY OF THE PARLIAMENT. SERRATS CONFIDED THAT HE WOULD BE ANSWERING A PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION LATER THE SAME DAY ON VALCARCEL'S QUALIFICATIONS AND READ A PREPARED STATEMENT WHICH SOUNDED MUCH LIKE A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN STATEMENT. COMMENT: THE QUESTION AND ANSWER ARE OBVIOUSLY PART OF A MANEUVER TO GENERATE PRESSURE WITHIN THE "CORTES" FOR VALCARCEL'S REDESIGNATION. VALCARCEL TOLD THE "CORTES" NOV 13 THAT HE HAD GOOD HEALTH AND INTENDED TO CONTINUE HIS POLITICAL CAREER. HE IS THE PRINCIPAL POLITICAL FIGURE BEHIND "ANEPA".

3. SERRATS STATED THAT "ANEPA" WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT EXTENSIVE REFORMS OF THE PRESENT REGIME BUT NOT A CHANGE IN THE "SPANISH STATE". THE BASIC LAWS HAVE TO BE ACCEPTED BY ALL FUTURE PARTICIPANTS IN THE POLITICAL ARENA, A POSITION WHICH EXCLUDES ALL THOSE WHO SEEK A DEFINITIVE BREAK ("RUPTURA") WITH THE PRESENT SYSTEM; AT PRESENT, HE SAID, SPANISH-STYLE MARXIST/SOCIALISTS (PSOE) WOULD BE EXCLUDED ALTHOUGH THE FRENCH OR WEST GERMAN VARIETY OF SOCIALISM WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. ACCORDING TO SERRATS, THERE WERE ENOUGH PEOPLE WITH A CONSERVATIVE AND PRAGMATIC VIEW OF WHAT WAS NEEDED IN SPAIN TO INSURE THAT "40 YEARS OF CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRESS WERE NOT PUT UP FOR GRABS". GRADUAL REFORMS COULD BE INTRODUCED THROUGH ORDINARY LEGISLATION AND IMAGINATIVE USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS TO BRING ABOUT PLURALISM IN SPAIN. WIDE-RANGING CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM REQUIRING REFERENDA, HOWEVER, WAS INADVISABLE. THE MONARCHY WOULD BE THE FIRST VICTIM INASMUCH AS POLITICAL ISSUES WOULD BE DISTORTED INTO THE BROADER ISSUE OF THE NEED FOR A COMPLETE CONSTITUTIONAL OVERHAUL. EMBOFF SAID U.S. SUPPORTED AN EVOLUTION TOWARDS A PLURALISTIC SYSTEM.

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4. THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE "CORTES" INTO A WESTERN-STYLE PARLIAMENTARY BODY IS THE FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS, SERRATS SAID. GOVT CONTROL OF THE PARLIAMENT'S AGENDA AND ITS ABILITY TO WITHDRAW PROPOSED LEGISLATION HAD TO BE ABROGATED. THE "CORTES" HAS TO BE EMPOWERED TO INITIATE LEGISLATION AND TO CONTROL THE GOVT THROUGH EFFECTIVE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEES.

5. ACCORDING TO SERRATS, JUAN CARLOS WILL BE UNABLE TO
CHANGE BOTH THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE
"CORTES" AT THE SAME TIME. INASMUCH AS THE OUTLOOK
WAS GOOD FOR VALCARCEL'S REDESIGNATION AS PRESIDENT OF
THE "CORTES", ONLY THE PRIME MINISTRY WOULD SEEM TO BE
SUSCEPTIBLE TO CHANGE. EVEN HERE, HOWEVER, SERRATS BELIEVED
THAT THE PRINCE MIGHT NOT WANT TO MOVE UNTIL THE MARCH 1976 ELECTIONS.

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